

March 16, 2020

Janet Abrahams
President & CEO
Housing Authority of Baltimore City
417 E. Fayette Street, Suite 1339,
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Ms. Abrahams:

The nation's Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) are on the front lines of the COVID-19 outbreak. Federally-assisted housing properties serve populations that are particularly vulnerable, including the homeless, older adults, and persons with certain pre-existing medical conditions. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), older adults and people with serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease are at a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19.¹

The homeless population presents a unique set of challenges related to the viability of social distancing strategies and access to resources. For instance, the CDC advises anyone who is sick to avoid public spaces and limit contact with other people.² The homeless population may require specific assistance from local Continuum of Care (CoC) services providers to implement CDC's guidance.

In light of the above, we urge you and your teams to direct your PHA, the owners and managers of federally-assisted housing, and appropriate CoC services providers to take the following steps to support the federal, state, and local effort to address COVID-19:

1. **Implement policies that limit non-resident access to buildings that house older adults.** COVID-19 disproportionately affects older populations. Many older adults have been advised to avoid travel and crowds and employ social distancing strategies. Limiting access for non-residents for essential purposes only could protect this vulnerable population and such policies are consistent with the President's advice "that nursing homes for the elderly suspend all medically unnecessary visits."³
2. **Notify all residents in federally-assisted housing properties in the event that a resident in a dwelling tests positive for COVID-19.** Mandatory notifications will allow residents

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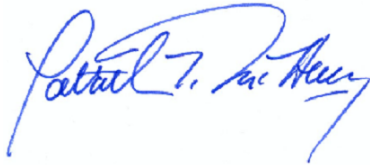
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to take additional precautions pursuant to CDC guidelines in the event that a neighbor tests positive for COVID-19.

3. **Develop strategies for managing outbreaks within the unsheltered homeless population.** The homeless population may not have viable options for self-quarantine or social distancing in the event of contact with a COVID-19 patient. Homeless patients also create a broader public health risk related to spreading COVID-19 throughout public spaces. CoC services providers should develop and implement tailored strategies appropriate for the local challenges of the homeless populations they serve.

Please provide a written response to cover how and when your housing authority will implement the recommendations described herein. Provide your response to the House Committee on Financial Services minority staff as soon as possible, but no later than March 20, 2020. Please contact staff at (202) 225-7502 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.



Patrick McHenry
Ranking Member

Sincerely,



Steve Stivers
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Housing,
Community Development,
and Insurance

March 16, 2020

James L. Bebley
Acting CEO
Chicago Housing Authority
60 E Van Buren St #12
Chicago, IL 60605

Dear Mr. Bebley:

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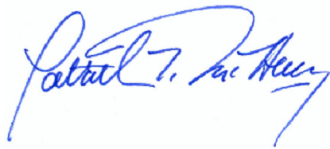
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Steve Stivers
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March 16, 2020

Kate Bennett
Administrator
Boston Housing Authority
52 Chauncy Street
Boston, MA 02111

Dear Ms. Bennett:

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Subcommittee on Housing,
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Richard Gentry
President & CEO
San Diego Housing Commission
1122 Broadway
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Gentry:

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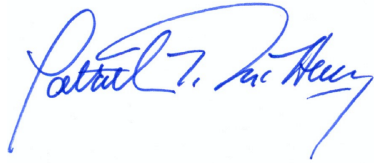
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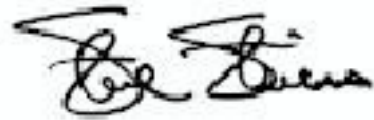
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Subcommittee on Housing,
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March 16, 2020

Douglas Guthrie
President & CEO
Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles
2600 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90057

Dear Mr. Guthrie:

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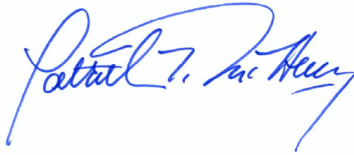
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Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Housing,
Community Development,
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March 16, 2020

Katherine Harasz
Executive Director
Santa Clara County Housing Authority
505 West Julian Street
San José, CA 95110

Dear Ms. Harasz:

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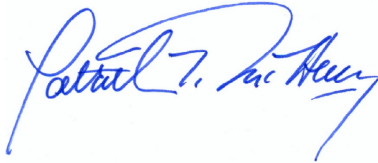
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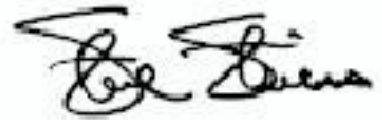
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Ranking Member
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March 16, 2020

Kelvin Jeremiah
President & CEO
Philadelphia Housing Authority
2013 Ridge Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19121

Dear Mr. Jeremiah:

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Subcommittee on Housing,
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March 16, 2020

Dariusz Kayhan
Deputy Executive Director of Programs
San Francisco Housing Authority
1815 Egbert Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124

Dear Mr. Kayhan:

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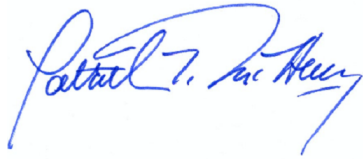
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Steve Stivers
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Subcommittee on Housing,
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March 16, 2020

Andrew Lofton
Executive Director
Seattle Housing Authority
190 Queen Anne Ave N.
P.O. Box 19028
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Lofton:

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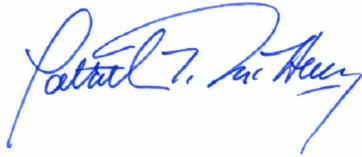
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Gregory Russ
Chair and Chief Executive Officer
New York City Housing Authority
250 Broadway, 9th Floor,
New York, NY 10007

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